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THE AMERICAN CENTER FOR LAW AND JUSTICE®

NEWS RELEASE

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ACLJ TO MEET LEGAL CHALLENGE OF ACLU IN DEFENDING CHILDREN'S INTERNET PROTECTION ACT

(Washington, DC) – The American Center for Law and Justice, an international public interest law firm, said today it will work to defend the Children's Internet Protection Act – a new federal law that requires public libraries to use computer software to block pornography – from a legal challenge by the ACLU.

"This is an issue about protecting our children," said Jay Sekulow, Chief Counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice, who testified before a U.S. Senate Committee regarding the constitutionality of mandating computer filtering devices for public libraries. "It is our view that the Children's Internet Protection Act is constitutional and we will work diligently to defend the law which is being challenged by the ACLU. Libraries and public schools have a compelling interest to protect the physical and psychological well being of children. The use of Internet filtering software as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act is a reasonable and constitutional way to protect children from online pornography."

The ACLJ will file briefs responding to the ACLU lawsuit that was filed today challenging the Act. Sekulow said the ACLJ will represent members of Congress that will likely include those who sponsored the legislation.

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At the same time, the ACLJ is working with a pro-child coalition of organizations and members of Congress in defending the new legislation.

The ACLJ submitted written testimony to the Federal Communications Commission last month concerning the constitutionality of the law. And, ACLJ Chief Counsel Jay Sekulow appeared before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in 1999 and testified that the use of computer filtering devices to protect children from sexually explicit material and pornography is constitutional. Both the testimony submitted to the FCC and the Senate Committee is available at the ACLJ web site at www.aclj.org.

"The new legislation is constitutional because it does not require that all computer terminals in libraries or public schools be outfitted with porn-filtering software," said Sekulow. "Those computers earmarked for use by minors must include the porn filters, but other computers used by adults do not. The Children's Internet Protection Act does not run afoul of the First Amendment and is an effective way to protect minors while permitting adults to use a filter-free Internet."

The Children's Internet Protection Act, which was signed into law late last year and scheduled to take effect next month, mandates that any school or library that refuses to install Internet filtering software on its computers would lose federal funds for technology upgrades.

The American Center for Law and Justice is an international public interest law firm and educational organization that focuses on constitutional issues and specializes in pro-family, pro-life, and pro-liberty cases. The ACLJ web site address is www.aclj.org.

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